

**STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER MEREDITH A. BAKER**

In the Matter of High-Cost Universal Service Support; Coalition for Equity in Switching Support Petition for Clarification, WC Docket No. 05-337

I recognize that, for now, we work within the universal service support mechanisms that we have. For that reason, I support this Notice of Proposed Rulemaking to consider whether to allow an incumbent local exchange carrier eligible telecommunications carrier's Local Switching Support (LSS) to increase if the carrier's access lines decrease below the thresholds set out in the rules. I look forward to reviewing the record on this discrete matter.

At the same time, I feel strongly that the Universal Service Fund is long overdue for a comprehensive overhaul, in light of significantly changed circumstances in the communications marketplace. My support for this item in no way prejudices my consideration of LSS, or any other matter related to high-cost support, in any comprehensive reform proposal that could come before me. I hope we will consider comprehensive reform, and I look forward to working with my Commission colleagues to develop a thoughtful, practical, and pragmatic universal service program that is appropriately tailored for the future of communications.